

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated February 27, 2004. Examiner's allowance of claims 55-57 and 59 is noted with appreciation. Applicants also wish to express their appreciation to Examiner for indicating that claims 11, 12, 18, 20, 25, 33, and 35 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-10, 13-17, 19, 21-24, 26-32, 34, 36-54 and 58 were rejected.

The allowable claims will be discussed first. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate Claim 11. Accordingly, claim 11 has been canceled and amended Claim 1 is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 2-17 and 21 now depend (in various degrees) from allowable Claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons and that they recite additional features of the invention.

Allowable Claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form and is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 19 and 20 depend from Claim 18 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons and that they recite additional features of the invention.

Claims 23, 24 and allowable Claim 25 have been incorporated into Claim 22. For this reason Claim 22 is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 23-25 have been canceled. Claims 26-35 now depend from allowable Claim 22 and are therefore also believed to be allowable for the same reasons and that they recite additional features of the invention.

Claims 1, 2, and 58 were provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type patenting as being unpatentable over claim 51 of co pending Application No. 09/911,918. In this regard, Applicants are submitting a Terminal Disclaimer herewith. Accordingly, Claim 58 is believed to be allowable.

Examiner rejected method Claims 36-54 on the grounds that: "the method steps consist of the broad steps of "creating", "attaching", "encapsulating", "forming", "polishing", "coating", and "removing" etc. and therefore these steps would be inherently satisfied by the apparatus of the reference as modified. Applicants have amended claim 36 to incorporate all the features previously recited in Claims 37, 41, and 43. For this reason, Claims 37, 41, and 43 have been canceled. Claim 36, as amended, recites:

A method of forming an optical coupler, the method comprising the steps of:
creating electrical connectors;
attaching a microelectronic device to the electrical connectors; ~~and~~
forming guides;
forming a transmission medium;
assembling components including guides and transmission medium;
encapsulating at least a portion of the electrical connectors and at least a portion
of the microelectronic device; and
singulating optical couplers.

The significance of these method steps is described in the instant application at page 10 lines 24 to 30. and page 11 lines 8-10 (also referencing FIG. 10). These method steps, including the step of singulating optical couplers is neither taught nor suggested in Tatsuno et al US 6,341,027. The benefits of fabricating an elongated structure that is then singulated into individual optical couplers include ease of manufacturing and consistent alignment of the singulated optical couplers. Such singulating was also disclosed in co-pending Application No. 09/911,918. However, a potential rejection under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting is believed to be overcome by the herewith submitted Terminal Disclaimer.

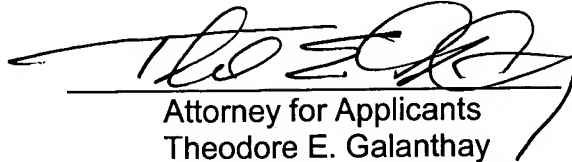
In conclusion, Claims 11, 23, 24, 25, 37, 41 and 43 have been canceled. Claim 36 has been amended to more succinctly recite Applicants' invention and is therefore believed to be allowable. Claims 38-40, 42, and 44-54 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons and that they recite additional features of the invention. Claims 55-57

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and 59 were allowed. All other claims are believed to be allowable for the reasons given hereinabove and that they are now written as suggested by Examiner.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all the claims currently in this application are in condition for allowance. If Examiner has a question or comment or if Applicants' attorney can assist in any manner whatsoever, Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned. An early notification of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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